

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows, substituting any amended claim(s) for the corresponding pending claim(s):

1. (Original) A drum-type merchandising system comprising:
at least one tray including one or more mounting supports for mounting the tray on a support within a drum type vending machine, the tray logically divided into a plurality of tray zones, wherein the tray includes at least one of a slot or a guide selectively receiving a tray subdivider separating one tray zone from another.
2. (Original) The drum-type merchandising system according to claim 1, wherein the tray includes a plurality of slots, a plurality of guides, or both selectively receiving a plurality of tray subdividers separating at least three zones on the tray.
3. (Currently Amended) The drum-type merchandising system according to claim 1, wherein the tray zones are one or more of unequal sizes and defined by at least one radially askew tray dividers.

4. (Original) The drum-type merchandising system according to claim 1, further comprising:

a center support member on which the at least one tray is mounted; and
a vend door disposed proximate to an outer edge of the at least one tray, wherein the vend door is selectively movable between a closed position and an open position, wherein the vend door, when in the open position, permits access to only one tray zone.

5. (Currently Amended) The drum-type merchandising system according to claim 4, further comprising:

a plurality of trays mounted on the center support member and including the at least one tray, wherein five trays are mounted at each level of nine levels spaced approximately five inches apart, wherein each tray may be divided into up to five tray zones, and wherein the center support member may be selectively rotated to position any selected tray zone on any of the plurality trays proximate to the vend door so that the selected tray zone is accessible when the vend door is in the open position.

6. (Currently Amended) The drum-type merchandising system according to claim 4, wherein the vend door moves a first distance between the open and closed positions when a first tray zone is positioned proximate to the vend door and a second distance between the open and closed positions when a second tray zone is positioned proximate to the vend door for the vend door is defined by at least one tray subdivider.

7. (Currently Amended) The drum-type merchandising system according to claim 4, further comprising:

a controller catch on a tray subdivider controlling a distance that the vend door moves between the open and closed positions based upon a size of a tray zone positioned proximate to an edge of the vend door.

8. (Original) The drum-type merchandising system according to claim 4, further comprising:

an enclosure having an opening within at least a sidewall, wherein the vend door is positioned over a portion of the opening when in the closed position;

a motor for rotating the center support member; and
controls that, when actuated, rotate the center support member to position a selected tray zone proximate to the vend door.

9. (Original) The drum-type merchandising system according to claim 8, further comprising:

a plurality of trays, including the at least one tray, each mounted on the center support member at one of a plurality of different levels, each tray logically divided into a plurality of tray zones and including at least one of a slot or a guide selectively receiving a tray subdivider separating one tray zone from another; and

a plurality of vend doors, including the vend door, each associated with a different level and each separately selectively movable between an open position and a closed position, wherein each vend door, when in the open position, permits access to only one tray zone on a corresponding tray.

10. (Original) A method of operating a drum-type merchandising system comprising:

logically dividing, into a plurality of tray zones, at least one tray including one or more mounting supports for mounting the tray on a support within a drum type vending machine; and separating one tray zone from another with a tray subdivider selectively received by at least one of a slot or a guide on the tray.

11. (Original) The method according to claim 10, further comprising:

separating at least three zones on the tray with a plurality of tray subdividers selectively received by a plurality of slots, a plurality of guides, or both on the tray.

12. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 10, further comprising:
separating the tray into tray zones of unequal sizes using a radial or radially askew tray subdivider.

13. (Original) The method according to claim 10, further comprising:
mounting the at least one tray on a center support member; and
selectively moving a vend door disposed proximate to an outer edge of the at least one tray between a closed position and an open position, wherein the vend door, when in the open position, permits access to only one tray zone.

14. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 13, further comprising:
mounting a plurality of trays, including the at least one tray, on the center support member, wherein five trays are mounted at each level of nine levels spaced approximately five inches apart;
selectively rotating the center support member to position any selected tray zone on any of the plurality trays proximate to the vend door so that the selected tray zone is accessible when the vend door is in the open position; and
associating prices individually with each tray zone on each tray at each level.

15. (Original) The method according to claim 13, further comprising:
moving the vend door a first distance between the open and closed positions when a first tray zone is positioned proximate to the vend door; and
moving a second distance between the open and closed positions when a second tray zone is positioned proximate to the vend door.

16. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 13, further comprising:
controlling a distance that the vend door moves between the open and closed positions based upon a size of tray subdivider defining a tray zone positioned proximate to an edge of the vend door.

17. (Original) A drum-type merchandising system comprising:

an enclosure around at least a portion of a drum perimeter;

a center support member within the enclosure;

at least one tray mounted on the center support member at each of a plurality of different levels; each tray logically divided into a plurality of tray zones;

at least one tray subdivider received by at least one of a slot or a guide on at least one of the trays, the tray subdivider separating one tray zone on the at least one of the trays from another; and

a vend door disposed proximate to an opening through the enclosure at each of the different levels, each vend door corresponding to the at least one of the trays having a tray subdivider selectively movable between an open position and a closed position,

wherein the vend door, when in an open position, and the tray subdivider permit access to only one tray zone on a corresponding tray.

18. (Original) The drum-type merchandising system according to claim 17, wherein the tray zones are of unequal sizes.

19. (Original) The drum-type merchandising system according to claim 17, wherein a distance that the vend door moves between the open and closed positions depends on a position of the tray subdivider relative to an edge of the tray.

20. (Original) The drum-type merchandising system according to claim 17, wherein at least one of the trays has a plurality of tray subdividers separating at least three tray zones on the tray.